producing countries in the world during the current year and the consequential increase in the international price of wheat.

(c) The Government took decisions to import wheat as per requirement but upto 50 lakh tonnes since procurement was only 111 lakh tonnes in RMS 2007-08 as against the requirement of 150 lakh tonnes of wheat for TPDS and welfare schemes.

(d) The present Minimum Support Price (MSP) of foodgrains is fixed based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) which is an expert body constituted for this purpose. The Government also announces bonuses prior to the procurement season whenever required. This policy has been working successfully for past several years since farmers have, the option of selling their produce to the Government agencies at the fixed procurement price or to the private parties, which ensures remunerative prices to them. This policy also serves to procure stocks for the Central Pool for food security.

Reduction in allocation of foodgrains to Sikkim

2053. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that central allocation of foodgrains such as wheat to the State of Sikkim under Public Distribution System has been reduced from 1200 MT to 600 MT and from 1st April, 2006;

(b) whether the huge cut in the quantity of wheat caused severe shortage in the supply of wheat to the ration card holders under PDS in the State; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the action taken in this respect by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) From June, 2006, due to a decline in stocks of wheat in Central Pool, the allocations made the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) have been rationalized for all the States/UTs, including Sikkim, on the basis of each State's average offtake for the last 3 years or the last year's offtake, which ever was lower. But, the overall allocation of foodgrains remained unchanged, for the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. For the Above Poverty Line (APL) families, the details of the pre-revised and revised allocation of wheat, made for the State of Sikkim, are as follows:

Monthly Allocation (in thousand tonnes)		
March, 2006	April and May, 2006	June, 2006 to March, 2007
600	600	245

However, with improved stock position, the Central Government made an adhoc allocation of 2100 Tons of wheat for the Above Poverty Line (APL) families in 7 instalments @ 300 tons per month for the months of September, 2006 to March, 2007. Presently, an adhoc allocation of 1200 Tons of wheat for the APL

families @ 300 tons per month has also been made for the months of April, 2007 to July, 2007.

Quality of foodgrains provided through PDS

2054. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the quality of foodgrains provided through Public Distribution System is ensured; and

(b) whether his Ministry is receiving complaints about the poor quality, if so, the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. It is ensured that only good quality foodgrains are provided through Public Distribution System (PDS). The following steps are taken to ensure good quality foodgrains for PDS:-

(i) Ample opportunities are provided to the officials of the State Governments/UT Administrations to inspect the stocks prior to lifting from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) godowns.

(ii) Instruction have been issued to all the State Governments/UT Administrations that an officer not below the rank of Inspector should be deputed to check the quality of foodgrains before lifting from the FCI godowns.

(iii) The samples of foodgrains are to be jointly drawn and sealed by the officers of the State Governments/UT Administrations and the FCI from the stocks for display at the counters of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) for the benefit of consumers.

(iv) The officers of the State Governments and the Ministry pay surprise checks to the FPSs, to over see the quality of foodgrains being distributed through PDS.

(b) Yes, Sir. A few complaints have been received in recent past about the poor quality of foodgrains including about imported red wheat being distributed through PDS. The complaints have been mostly due to the preference for white wheat, whereas imported wheat is mostly red wheat. The complaints received were sent to FCI for investigation/taking necessary action to ensure that only good quality foodgrains are issued for distribution under PDS.

Seeking assistance for treatment through media

2055. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poor people seek help from others including foreigners through media to meet the cost of life saving operations to save their children;